

Workforce well-being annual report: 2023 to 2024

How we supported workforce well-being from 2023 to 2024.

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How we supported workforce well-being from 2023 to 2024.

Why is well-being important?

In recent years there has been [growing evidence](#) showing how supporting well-being can benefit people working in social care and early years and childcare, and improve the quality of care people receive.

Working in social care or early years and childcare can be an inspiring and rewarding career, but we know that the pressures in these sectors can affect workforce well-being.

It's one of the ambitions of [A Healthier Wales](#), our joint workforce strategy with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) for health and social care, to create an engaged, motivated and healthy workforce. Our [strategic plan](#) also sets out our commitment to improving well-being for the social care and early years workforce.

Evidence tells us that good workplace well-being makes a real difference. It means:

- we have a sense of purpose and achievement in our role
- we perform better if we're happier at work and we're confident in what we're doing, which means we support people better
- staff who feel supported at work are more likely to stay with an organisation.

We've produced an evidence summary about the link between good workplace well-being and retention, which you can read on our [Insight Collective website](#).

Workforce well-being must be a group effort. At Social Care Wales, we provide frameworks and tools to help the sector work towards a positive culture that supports the well-being of the workforce.

Our framework, [*Your well-being matters*](#), sets out actions employers, manager and workers can take to achieve better well-being. Each area of the workforce, along with trade unions, plays an important role in bringing this vision to life.

What's the current picture?

In 2023, we launched our first all-Wales social care [workforce survey](#). We asked people working in social care about the things that affect their well-being. We found that overall people felt valued by colleagues and the people they support, and morale was generally high.

But, many people, particularly managers, showed signs of stress and found it hard to switch off when leaving work.

Last year, you told us:

- three quarters of managers found it hard to switch off from work
- one in six people didn't feel safe at work
- only one in three felt there was enough support to deal with stress.

In response, we offered:

- support to understand and use the well-being framework
- training sessions and workshops for managers about compassion practices and psychological safety in teams.

We asked people where they would go for information. Almost half of managers said they would come to us. Overall:

- one third of those surveyed would come to us
- half of those surveyed would go to a manager.

In response, we:

- improved our well-being webpages by signposting to offers of support. We also promoted the pages regularly and they had 3,500 visitors in 2023
- offered bespoke training for managers and raised awareness of support at registered manager forums.

We'll continue to monitor the results from the annual workforce survey and work with stakeholders and employers, with the aim of:

- increasing how many of the workforce feel morale is good (65 per cent in 2023)
- making sure the workforce knows where to go to find out about health and well-being support at work (in 2023, 33 per cent said they would go to Social Care Wales and seven per cent said Canopi)
- reducing the percentage of the workforce looking to leave the sector in the next twelve months (26 per cent in 2023)
- reducing the percentage of the workforce who say they've experienced bullying, discrimination or harassment (37 per cent in 2023)
- introducing standardised methodology scores that can be compared nationally, for:
 - life satisfaction
 - feeling worthwhile
 - happiness
 - anxiety

and we'll establish a baseline in 2024.

What progress has been made?

Since we began our dedicated work on well-being in 2022, we've:

- established [a health and well-being framework](#), where employers and employees can measure their organisation against an agreed set of standards
- supported and promoted the Welsh Government funded universal [mental health support service](#) that for the first time is free at the point of access for the whole workforce across health and social care
- provided information sessions, workshops and talks for the sector about the well-being framework
- established an online well-being community of practice and support network to help the sector share ideas and practice
- held information sessions for the sector on a range of topics including financial well-being and menopause
- held a national well-being conference for the social care and early years workforce
- offered targeted training to support managers
- run online peer networks and provided training to support people to create peer networks locally, that provide mutual help and support for managers
- carried out research on social work terms and conditions. The Welsh Local Government Association is now leading work on options for a more consistent approach
- contributed to the work of the [Social Care Fair Work Forum](#) to create a progression framework for the social care workforce
- established the first workforce survey that gives us a baseline on workforce well-being indicators in the sector

- identified a wide range of positive approaches we can continue to build on, for example Accolades award winner [Antur Waunfawr](#).

Highlights from 2023

Last year, we held seven events which were attended by 197 people across the sector. The sessions covered a variety of topics including:

- financial well-being
- support for working carers
- supporting neurodivergent staff
- feeling valued and supported in early years and childcare.

Attendees at a number of these events told us they found the sessions helped them with ideas and tools to share with their staff and teams.

“Lots of resources and links, info for supporting staff and also possibly those we know out of work who may be struggling.”

Feedback from attendee at our financial well-being session.

We provided training sessions about psychological safety and compassion practices, which were attended by 45 managers.

We also presented to 24 forums, conferences and events to raise awareness of workplace well-being and the support available.

We had really positive feedback from training and information sessions. Here are some of the things attendees told us.

“Fab. Today was great. Much to think about and looking forward to putting it into practice here.”

“Thank you for this morning. The trainer presented the session brilliantly and was incredibly insightful, demonstrating a wide range of knowledge and explained even the most complex of information in a joyful and simple manner.”

“As a business owner and someone going through the menopause it was so helpful from a personal and business point of view.”

“Great to start to think about what self-compassion means to us as individuals. The 'listening and appreciation' part was something I have been part of in other compassionate leadership sessions, so it was good that Social Care Wales sessions aligned with other programmes.”

We had almost 3,300 visits to our webpages from 2023 to 2024. We launched new pages in August 2023 making it easier for people to find resources and access our framework.

We also held our first well-being conference, which was attended by 87 people working in social care and early years and childcare.

The conference received positive feedback, with 91 per cent overall satisfaction for the day and 100 per cent of attendees saying the day met its objectives. The most common words used by attendees to describe the session were:

informative

- interesting
- positive
- fun
- inspiring.

Our focus in 2024 and 2025

Helping you to use the *Your well-being matters* framework

We'll:

- continue to promote the framework through our communication channels
- continue to deliver awareness sessions to the sector, to explain the framework and why it matters. We're launching 'Introduction to workforce well-being' online sessions, to help people understand and use the framework in their own organisations
- launch a digital learning resource to help people better understand workforce well-being and the framework
- continue to review and update the supporting tools, action templates, guides, training provision, and resources
- ask for ideas and feedback to help us continually improve our framework and make sure we're responding to what the sector needs most.

How will we know if it's made a difference?

We'll:

monitor and report on visits to our framework

- evaluate engagement with our digital resources
- ask people for feedback and to share how they're using the framework.

Information and training

We'll:

- continue to host online information sessions about topics identified by our network and community of practice
- promote the Canopi service offer to the sector and continue to support the service's development and promotion for the social care workforce
- maintain and promote our webpages with up-to-date information about the support available to the social care, early years and childcare workforce
- provide information sessions about key topics, in response to feedback from the sector
- provide tailored one-to-one advice and support to people using the well-being framework
- develop guidance to help the sector better understand peer support and explain how to provide opportunities for peer support locally.

How will we know if it's made a difference?

We'll:

- monitor social care access to the Canopi service
- evaluate attendance and feedback from information sessions and training
- monitor visits to our webpages and awareness of our webpages through the national workforce survey
- identify commitments and actions from advice and support sessions.

Communities and networks

To support the sector to share practice and better understand how the framework is being used, we've established a new well-being community of practice.

We also work with organisations to share good practice, through our communities as well as in our events.

We'll:

- continue to run our Social Care Well-being Advisory Group for key stakeholders in social care, early years and childcare to help shape our work and highlight current pressures and issues
- continue to work with our networks and community to set priorities for our well-being work
- grow our community of practice by setting-up community meet ups to help the sector develop connections and share ideas.

How will we know if it made a difference?

We'll:

- aim to increase our community membership by 10 per cent
- identify case studies and practice sharing
- gather feedback from our communities and networks.

How you can get involved

To find out more about our work or join our well-being community, get in touch with us on wellbeing@socialcare.wales

You can find out more about workplace well-being on our [well-being web pages](#).